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THE GENUS PEZIZA AND PEZIZA COCCINEA.

By Supt. M. E. Hard, Chillicothe, Ohio.

This is a very large genus, and will be met by the mushroom hunter frequently. Many are so small that they will easily escape detection unless special pains are taken to find them. They are found on leaves, on partially buried sticks, on decayed logs, on dung, in cellars, about barns and outhouses, on the stems of herbaceous plants, especially on the nettle.

There are about 150 species found in this country, and many reported in Europe not as yet found here. They belong to the true cup fungi. Many are sessile, while others have stems. They are usually fleshy and soft and of a variety of colors.

They have a peculiar explosive apparatus for hurling out the spores so that the wind can better scatter them abroad.

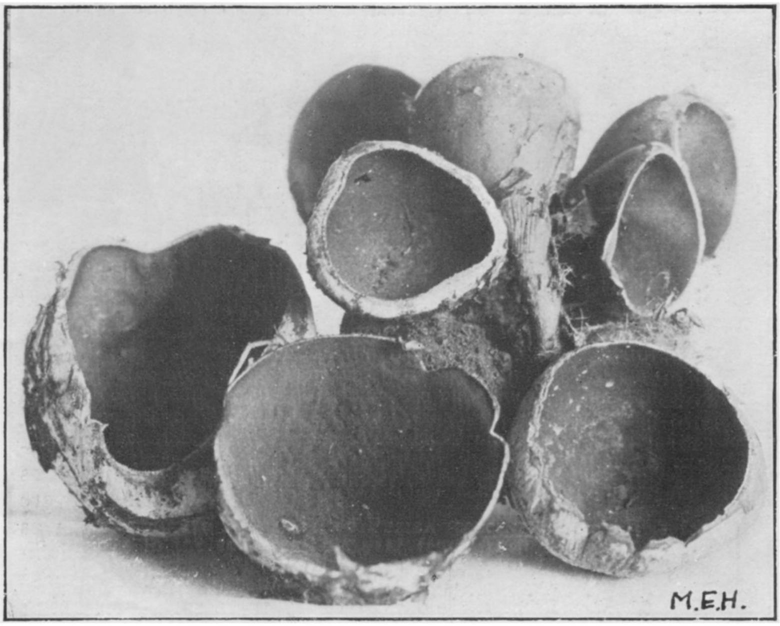

Fig. 177. Pe-zi'-za coc-cin'-e-a. Scarlet within. M. E. Hard, Chillicothe, O.

The fruiting surface is usually saucer or cup-shaped and the bowl of the saucer, which is the fruiting surface, is completely filled with a palisade of cylindrical sacs and in each sac there are eight spores. These sacs have lids at the apex and when the plant is mature they spurt out their spores. If the observer will lie down on the ground and watch a matured cup for a few minutes he will see very distinctly a small cloud of spores thrown off at intervals without his disturbing the plant in the least, but should he disturb the plant just a little he will plainly see a large cloud of spores from the jar. I have taken them into schoolrooms after having been kept for two or three days and by a slight jar the cloud of spores would be visible to the entire room. A number of the cup fungi has this explosive apparatus.

Those in Figure 177 are called Peziza coccinea Jacq. It is found in damp places in the spring of the year from April to June. However, I

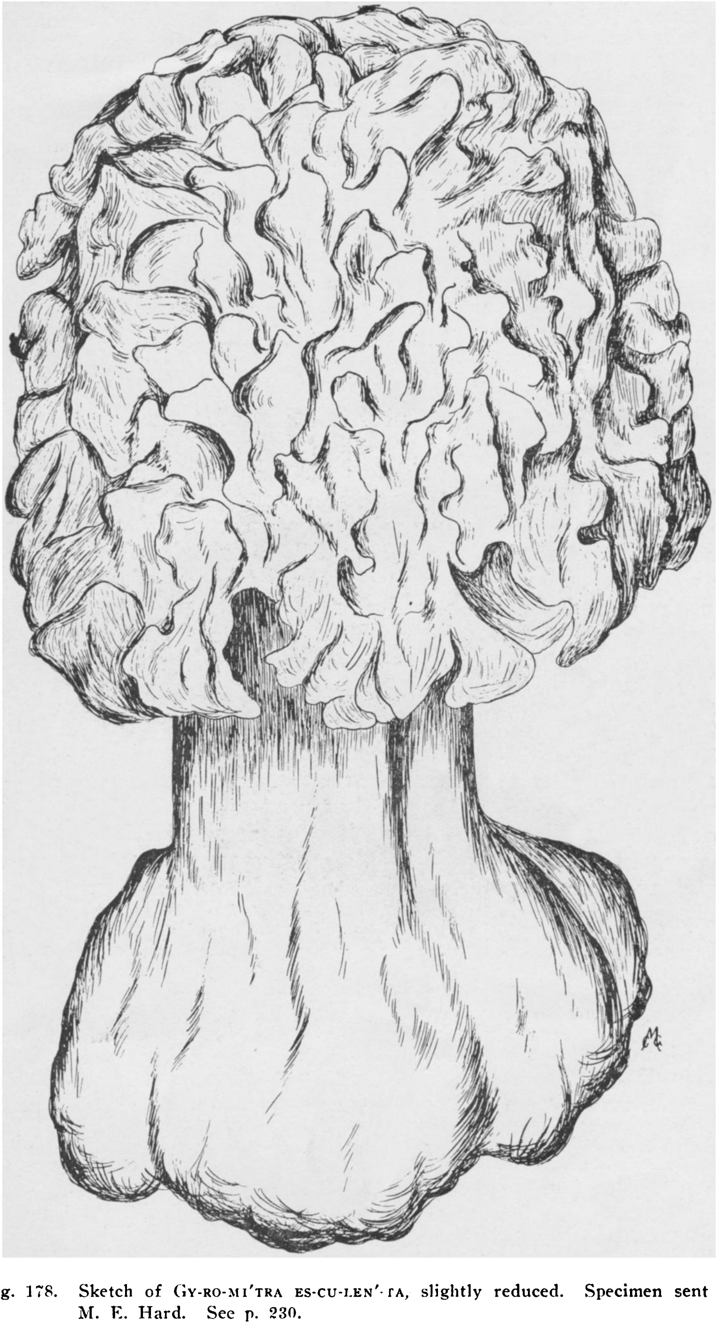

Fig. 178. Sketch of GY-RO-MI'TRA ES-CU-LEN'-TA, slightly reduced. Specimen sent by M. E. Hard. See p. 230.

have found it late in November. It is found on sticks partially buried in the leaves. It is easily distinguished by its deep scarlet color, which gives name to the species. Its external surface is whitish or pinkish and inclined to be tomentose. The stem is short, whitish and tomentose.

This is one of the most beautiful plants in the woods, and dull must be the observer who will not pause to examine this brilliant fungus, truly a "Fairy Cup."

It is very abundant in the woods about Chillicothe this spring, yet its distribution is widespread.

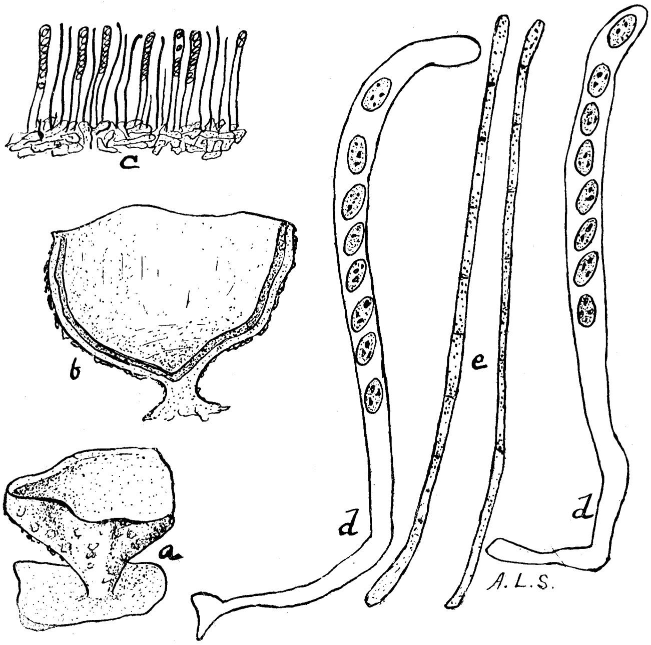

Fig. 179. PE-ZI'-ZA COC-CIN'-E-A. showing plant (a); section of plant (b); portion of the red fruiting layer (c); two asci, each ascus with eight spores (d); and two paraphyses (e).

MUSHROOM NOTES. I.

W. A. Kellerman.

VARIATION IN URNULA CRATERIUM.—We present some illustrations of Urnula craterium, Figs. 180 and 182, to show the great variation in shape and size of these black plants. One could well believe that more than one species was represented; but specimens have been submitted from time to time to Dr. Durand, of Cornell University, and the reports from him show that all the forms belong to the species named above—*Urnula craterium.*

It is one of the commonest and one of the earliest to appear in the season. In the partially cleared woods, where twigs and branches in abundance have been decaying for some time, it luxuriates most profusely.